

PART 6 : CLAIMS

We claim :

1. A method for making inquiries :

Under control of a request module of a user system,

Displaying fields for creating a request for an action, and for proposing its reward; and

In response to the fields fulfilled, sending the order to a server system to propagate the request to a list of individuals proposed by the requester;

Under control of the propagation module of the server system,

Receiving the information about the request to be created,

Generating messages displaying the request to the list of individuals; and

Under control of the client system of the receiver,

Proposing the choices of whether to propagate the request to a new list of individuals that the receiver proposes with the promise of a potential reward or to act on the request with the promise of a potential reward; and

In response to choosing the propagation option, sending an order to the server system to forward the request to a new individual list, following the propagation module;

Keep on propagating the request through such like a tree process,

In response to choosing the “act on” option, sending an order to take into account the action of the user;

Under control of the user system,

Displaying the option to the user whether to accept or to reject the act as fulfilling his request,

In response to an acceptance, sending the order to reward the replier and those who propagated the request through the branch of the replier.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the propagation is a viral process.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the act the user can perform on the request can be sending information to the requester about an object, a person difficult to find or any question difficult to answer (e.g., collectible, lost and found, missing, etc).
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the act the user can perform on the request can be about any type of transaction the requester wishes to do, without any constraints on its type (e.g., providing lead for new client, for new investors, new partner, new employer, etc).
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the act the user can perform on the request can be performing a commercial or non-commercial act with the requester (e.g., purchase, registration, etc).

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the act the user can perform on the request can be performing an act to some third party (e.g., communicate with them, send a petition, etc).

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the display of identity of the user that performs the request can be anonymous.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the request can be public so that visitors to the site can view the request, be registered at level 1, propagate or act on the request.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the user that performs the request chooses the reward scheme stating the reward for fulfilling the request and the reward for being a simple intermediary.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the reward scheme can be of type "automatic" or "predetermined".

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the split for the "automatic" scheme is computed, at each level, using a ratio R fixed by the system for all requests and for all levels (e.g., $R=20\%$ kept for the simple intermediary and 80% available for the level below).

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the split for the "automatic" scheme is computed using a ratio fixed by each requester for all levels.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the split for the "automatic" scheme is decided at each level using a ratio fixed by each propagator for his level.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the split for “predetermined” scheme defines both the reward for the person successfully acting on the request, and a descriptive list of rewards for the simple intermediaries in the winning branch.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the user that performs the request can choose whether to include or to exclude the submitter that proposed a winning solution from the sharing out and give the fulfilling reward to the level just above (e.g., in case he is the buyer in a sell request).

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the two reward schemes are displayed as preview in the web pages and messages, that is that before knowing who won, the potential gain as respondent or as simple intermediary can be stated for each participant.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein a receiver of the request does not need to identify himself when propagating because being automatically identified by clicking in an electronic message that contains an unique identifier under a rich link.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein the individual identifier is an electronic identifier (e.g., login, phone number, electronic mail address, etc).

19. The method of claim 1 wherein the individual identifier is a postal address.

20. An receiver system for propagating or acting to a request comprising :

A display component for displaying the message generated by the server system;

A propagation component that in response to a new list of individuals, sends an order to the server system to forward the message to the list of individuals;

A reply component that in response to a reply to the request to an action, sends an order to the server system to warn the requester about the answer.

21. The receiver system of claim 20 wherein the display component is a browser.

22. The receiver system of claim 20 wherein the display component is a mail reader.

23. The receiver system of claim 20 wherein the display component is a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA).

24. The receiver system of claim 20 wherein the display component is a telephone.

25. The receiver system of claim 20 wherein users can set positive filters to be automatically included at level 1 of public request that fit certain criteria.

26. A method for making inquiries using a requester system, the method comprising :

Displaying fields for creating a request for an action, proposing its reward and the list of individuals to propagate to; and

In response to the information being given, sending to a server system an order to propagate a message including the information the user that performs the request filled in,

Whereby the user that performs the request expects, thanks to the propagation system, a reply to his request for an action collected by the server.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the user system and the server system communicate via the Internet.

28. The method of claim 26 wherein the displaying uses HTML codes provided by the server system.

29. The method of claim 26 wherein the displaying uses XML codes provided by the server system.

30. The method of claim 26 wherein the displaying uses Infrared codes provided by the server system.

31. The method of claim 26 wherein the propagation is electronic mails system.

32. The method of claim 26 wherein the propagation uses cellular (e.g., sms) message system.

33. The method of claim 26 wherein the displaying uses telephone (tone or pulse) system.

34. The method of claim 26 wherein the displaying uses digital system of transfer of information.

35. The method of claim 26 wherein the displaying uses analogical system of transfer of information.

36. The method of claim 26 wherein the propagation uses electronic system of transfer of information.

36. The method of claim 26 wherein the propagation uses electronic system of transfer of information.